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->From the Editor's Keyboard          "Saying it like it is!"
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Again this week, I've run out of time. Maybe I'm getting old(er), but I have been having trouble getting our weekly issue out with plenty of time to spare to write some passing thoughts about what's going on these days. Heck, I haven't even been writing about the weird weather that we've been experiencing lately! So, again, let's move right into this week's issue; and I'll try to find some time, eventually, to add a few words of "wisdom"!

Until next time...

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->In This Week's Gaming Section    - 'Haunted House' Goes Mobile!
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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!

Microsoft Throws Kinect Under A Bus

On June 9, Microsoft will sell a cut-price Xbox One for \$399 without the Kinect voice and gesture controller.

"We've heard from people that they just like to play games with a controller in their hand and what we wanted to do was make sure that for those people there's a version of Xbox that really meets the exact needs that they have," said Phil Spencer, head of Xbox.

Spencer said that 80 per cent of Xbox One users use Kinect to control

their console, with an average of 120 voice commands per user per month addressed to Kinect. "Xbox On," "Xbox Broadcast," and "Xbox Record That," are the most popular commands, he said.

But when you think about it, those figures aren't all that impressive. One in five people don't use voice commands, and if someone uses voice command to turn the console off and on every day for a month, that's 60 commands taken care of right away. People are just not chatty with the Xbox, it seems.

Nor are developers particularly enamored with using the Kinect hardware. There are few games that actually require the Kinect system, and they aren't very popular. Spenser said that if people want to buy the \$399 (£236) package and add a Kinect later, they can.

The new package is a big rollback for Microsoft, which had previously insisted that Kinect was essential to the Xbox experience. Initially, the One console wouldn't work without Kinect attached, although Redmond rolled back that "feature" just before the launch after privacy concerns were raised.

You can still buy the full Xbox One package with a Kinect controller for the standard price of \$499, but by offering a cheaper version Microsoft can at least compete head-to-head with the Sony PlayStation 4 on price. Xbox sales have been lagging behind Sony's worldwide, and the Japanese firm is spanking Redmond's console in the US market that Xbox considers its own, and it's clear this gap has some in Microsoft management worried.

Spencer also said that both the Xbox 360 and the One console will now allow people to use streaming applications such as Netflix, Skype, YouTube, and even Internet Explorer on the consoles without having to pay Microsoft \$10 a month (or \$60 a year) for the privilege by getting an Xbox Live Gold subscription.

It's a smart move, and again one that Sony has used as a stick to beat Redmond; at the PS4 launch, president of Sony Computer Entertainment Andrew House made much of the fact that his console could be used subscription-free (up to a point). Microsoft's attempt to lock down its console behind a paywall was also staggeringly unpopular with a highly vocal group of users.

However, to encourage more people to sign up to Microsoft, Spencer said that Live subscribers will now get a handful of free games, between 50 and 75 per cent off the cost of new titles for the gaming console, and get access to a "virtual VIP room" that will offer some free kit and discounts for other products.

Spencer can at least make these changes with minimal loss of face. He took over as Xbox supremo in March after Don Mattrick left the company for Zynga shortly after the launch of the One console.

'Halo' TV Series, 'Halo 5' Game Launching in 2015

Master Chief is returning to the battlefield next year.

Microsoft announced plans Friday to release the video game sequel

"Halo 5: Guardians" for the Xbox One and a "Halo" television series to be produced by Steven Spielberg in fall 2015. The next entry in the sci-fi shooter series starring super-soldier Master Chief will run at 60 frames per second on a new engine created by "Halo" developer 343 Studios.

"'Halo 5: Guardians' is obviously a big deal for us," said Frank O'Connor, franchise development director at 343. "It's the next chapter in the Master Chief saga. It's also a big deal for us because of the transition to the Xbox One platform. All of the 'Halo' games more or less have added something to the Xbox ecosystem."

Bonnie Ross, general manager at 343 Studios, noted that additional plans this year for the "Halo" franchise would be announced June 9 at Microsoft's presentation at the Electronic Entertainment Expo, the largest annual gathering of the gaming industry.

At last year's E3, Microsoft showed footage featuring a cloaked figure revealed to be Master Chief encountering a bird-like robot in a desert with the words "2014: Your Journey Begins on Xbox One."

"Halo: Combat Evolved" launched in 2001 on the original Xbox and became a cultural sensation, spawning several sequels, spin-offs, novels and comic books set within the game's universe.

"Halo 4," which was released in 2012 for the Xbox 360, smashed entertainment industry records by making \$300 million in its opening week. A live-action digital series, "Forward Unto Dawn," was released alongside "Halo 4." Microsoft previously announced Ridley Scott was executive producing a similar multi-part "Halo" film.

The Xbox One could use a boost from Master Chief. Microsoft Corp. said last month that sales of its latest console had slowed to 1.2 million in the quarter through March, compared to the 3.9 million it sold during the holiday season. The total of 5.1 million was behind the 7 million in sales of the PlayStation 4 by rival Sony Corp.

Atari Announces Early Access to Fast-Paced Combat and Crafting of Minimum

It's time for PC gamers to sharpen their tools and ready their trigger fingers as Atari, one of the world's most recognized publishers and producers of interactive entertainment, today opens the gates to early access via Steam for the third-person, multiplayer online combat and crafting game, Minimum. To enter early access and be the first to experience the mayhem of Minimum's chaotic world, players can purchase the game for \$19.99 on Steam or visit <http://www.playminimum.com/>.

As a company that's been known for being a gaming pioneer, Atari's gone through multiple transformations to bring appealing and unique experiences to the ever-changing gaming audience.

Set in a minimalistic stylized universe, Minimum features fast-paced, session-based combat that pits teams of five against each other with powerful, craftable weapons. Each team has its own massive robotic Titan that they must power up and support so that it can help them fight and destroy the enemy's base. At the core of Minimum is a blueprint crafting system where players collect resources to create customized, upgradable weapons and armor that power-up during kill streaks, enabling skilled

warriors and Titans to become deadlier as matches progress.

"As a company that's been known for being a gaming pioneer, Atari's gone through multiple transformations to bring appealing and unique experiences to the ever-changing gaming audience," said Fred Chesnais, Chief Executive Officer, Atari, Inc. "Minimum ushers in the next era of Atari gaming, with its distinctive mix of combat and crafting. We're excited with the way the game turned out and are thrilled to finally bring Minimum's exhilarating gameplay to PC."

Developed by Human Head Studios, Minimum features full Steam integration, which means players sign in with their standard Steam login and will have access to their Steam Wallet and Inventory, allowing them to trade crafting items, blueprints and other acquired items with their fellow Steam members. Additionally, the game provides automatic matchmaking so players never have to hunt for servers.

Fans can visit www.playminimum.com to watch the trailer, register for game updates and receive free bonus in-game items. For more information about Minimum, follow us on Twitter @PlayMinimumGame, Like us on Facebook and visit our Official Wiki page.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online      -          Online Users Growl & Purr!
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Haunted House Now Available on iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch

Atari, one of the world's most recognized publishers and producers of interactive entertainment, today announced the launch of a re-imagined, free-to-play mobile version of the classic game Haunted House, for iPhone, iPad and iPod touch. The spooky, eye-popping fan-favorite is free-to-play and available for download in the App Store.

Developed by Kung Fu Factory, the team behind the popular Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Rooftop Run, Haunted House is filled with creepy fun and new gameplay. Entering the endless runner app, players are instantly dropped into the shoes of a boy who becomes lost in a scary place. To help him find his way home, players must protect and clear a path for him as he runs, jumps, and outmaneuvers treacherous traps hidden throughout the creepy mansion and graveyard. Thwart monsters to advance, trigger springs and build bridges to reach new heights and stay alive by picking up power-up boosts including:

Scepters - Become invincible against monsters and traps
Master Keys - Auto-triggers all bridges
Urns - Collect urns for an extra life
Coin Magnets - Attracts coins faster within a certain distance

For more information and to watch the trailer, visit: <http://bit.ly/1jt60Hw>. A PC version of Haunted House, a darker and different rendition of the mobile game is currently in development and is

set to release in Summer 2014.

"From enthusiasts of the original Haunted House to today's on-the-go mobile gamers, players of all ages and generations are in for a completely new and fun gameplay experience," said Fred Chesnais, Chief Executive Officer, Atari, Inc.

"As we look to celebrate and refresh classic titles like Haunted House and RollerCoaster Tycoonfi, we will continue to extend fan-favorites to new PC, digital, social and mobile versions, as well as expand the Atari brand to online gambling and other gaming platforms."

As an iconic brand that spans the digital gaming, online gambling and platform gaming industries, Atari's debut of Haunted House for iPhone, iPad and iPod touch comes on the heels of multiple partnerships and launches in the first quarter alone. These milestones include the release of RollerCoaster Tycoon 4 Mobile for iPhone, iPad and iPod touch and forthcoming PC version, which is set to hit shelves during the 2014 Winter season. Atari recently announced a third-person, multiplayer online combat game titled Minimum, which is now available for early access on Steam. Lastly, Atari announced strategic partnerships with FlowPlay - to debut its first social casino, Atari Casino (Fall 2014), and Pariplay - to develop and launch Atari-branded real-money gambling and lottery video games (Late 2014).

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

FCC Revising Internet Rules After Public Backlash

Federal Communications Commission Chairman Tom Wheeler is broadening the scope of his proposed open Internet rules and suggesting tougher standards for Internet providers who wish to create paid priority fast lanes on their networks.

According to an FCC official, Wheeler made revisions after the commission received 35,000 public comments many of them expressing outrage. The FCC first briefed reporters on the proposed rules last month.

Wheeler, a Democrat, also tweaked his proposal after the five-member commission's two other Democrats expressed concern.

"The new draft clearly reflects public input the commission has received," the FCC official said in a statement. "The draft is explicit that the goal is to find the best approach to ensure the Internet remains open and prevent any practices that threaten it."

Among the additions is a provision that would "presume" it to be illegal for an Internet provider to prioritize the traffic of an affiliated service for example, it would be considered illegal if Comcast Corp.

tried to give faster treatment to video streams of its subsidiary network, NBC.

However, an Internet service provider would be allowed to challenge that "presumption," the official said.

In the revised proposal, Wheeler also seeks comment on the possibility of treating broadband providers as so-called "common carriers" like telephone companies, which are subject to greater regulation than Internet providers, under Title II of the Communications Act of 1934.

The FCC and Wheeler have so far avoided subjecting cable and telecoms companies to Title II treatment, although Wheeler has said the option remains on the table. In the new proposal, he entertains more discussion on it than his initial proposal did.

The proposal also asks whether all paid-priority fast lanes should be banned outright. The previous version only asks if some paid-priority services should be banned.

Wheeler has faced a torrent of criticism after the earlier proposal made it appear as if he was overhauling the principle of "network neutrality," which says Internet service providers should not be allowed to discriminate against Web traffic depending on its source.

Such discrimination could result if a phone company like AT&T slowed down traffic from phone services like Skype, or if Comcast slowed Netflix video speeds to favor its own online video service, Xfinity.

The FCC will hold a preliminary vote on the rules Thursday before submitting them for formal public input. Wheeler aims to have a set of rules in place by year's end. An earlier set of rules from 2010 was struck down by an appeals court in January after Verizon challenged them.

Republicans Turn Up Heat on FCC Over Net Neutrality Push

A group of conservative lawmakers are calling on FCC boss Tom Wheeler to take a step away from his plans to mandate a net neutrality policy for the communications watchdog.

In a letter (PDF) signed and posted by House Speaker John Boehner, several prominent Republicans inform Wheeler of their opposition to what they call "antiquated regulation on the Internet" which could harm job growth.

In addition to Boehner, the letter is signed by House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy and Republican Conference Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers.

All four argue that if Wheeler enacts rules which prevent networks from charging services for preferred network access, economic growth in the US would be stifled.

"Private sector investment has been a cornerstone of broadband deployment, and imposing expansive network neutrality regulations would only serve to deter investment and stifle one of the brightest spots in

our economy," the lawmakers write in their letter.

The letter also looks to dissuade Wheeler from invoking provisions in Title II of The Telecommunications Act of 1996 which would reclassify broadband internet as a "common carrier" service subject to blanket non-discrimination requirements.

"Investment experts advise that implementing such a scheme- or even considering regulating broadband as Title II service- created regulatory uncertainty that causes a reduction in the investment capital necessary for even greater broadband deployment," the group wrote.

"The FCC must correct this misstep and make clear its commitment to establishing a stable regulatory scheme that allows for investment and innovation."

The letter comes amidst pressure from both sides of the net neutrality debate on Tom Wheeler and the FCC as the group decides how to proceed with its Open Internet plans. Earlier this year a US court ruled that the commission could not impose net neutrality mandates upon broadband services as they are currently classified.

When Wheeler, who has come under fire for his past work as a telecoms industry lobbyist, introduced a revised plan which would allow for certain 'fast lane' service delivery arrangements, net neutrality advocates erupted with a series of protests.

The FCC is set to further discuss the matter tomorrow at a scheduled open meeting.

Only You Can Save The Internet

The United States Federal Communications Commission on Thursday approved its revised net neutrality plan in a 3-2 vote. Now, for the first time, the full proposal documenting the controversial plan that many fear will ruin the Internet is available to read in its entirety.

Net neutrality should naturally describe a set of guidelines put in place in an effort to ensure that the Web is kept neutral, and that certain companies are not given an unfair advantage over others. To read the FCC's plan, however, one wonders if the Commission had the exact opposite intention in mind - a vision of creating an Internet specifically designed to give large companies a huge advantage over smaller companies.

The proposal covers a great deal of ground, but there is one area in particular that has people worried.

According to the FCC's new net neutrality guidelines, Internet service providers will be able to create fast lanes for certain companies that are willing to pay for quicker connections. This means that when their services are accessed by end users, the connections will be nice and smooth. When a customer tries to access the services of companies not willing or able to pay for a fast lane, however, the service could be much slower.

If you're wondering how exactly that plan would make the Internet

neutral, you're not alone. And as we've seen, the FCC's controversial plan is already ruining the Internet.

This newly approved net neutrality proposal now enters a period of public comment from now until September, when the Commission will theoretically take into account comments it receives over the next few months and create a final set of rules.

If you oppose the FCC's plan, this period of time is crucial.

There are several ways you can make your voice heard. Start by reading the FCC's proposal in its entirety, and then read this post. You can (and should) also email the FCC with your thoughts by following the instructions here.

Most importantly, you can also participate in the public comment process by submitting your comments on the FCC website.

Only one thing is certain: Doing nothing will get you nowhere.

How The NSA Tampers With US-made Internet Routers

For years, the US government loudly warned the world that Chinese routers and other internet devices pose a "threat" because they are built with backdoor surveillance functionality that gives the Chinese government the ability to spy on anyone using them. Yet what the NSA's documents show is that Americans have been engaged in precisely the activity that the US accused the Chinese of doing.

The drumbeat of American accusations against Chinese internet device manufacturers was unrelenting. In 2012, for example, a report from the House Intelligence Committee, headed by Mike Rogers, claimed that Huawei and ZTE, the top two Chinese telecommunications equipment companies, "may be violating United States laws" and have "not followed United States legal obligations or international standards of business behaviour". The committee recommended that "the United States should view with suspicion the continued penetration of the US telecommunications market by Chinese telecommunications companies".

The Rogers committee voiced fears that the two companies were enabling Chinese state surveillance, although it acknowledged that it had obtained no actual evidence that the firms had implanted their routers and other systems with surveillance devices. Nonetheless, it cited the failure of those companies to cooperate and urged US firms to avoid purchasing their products: "Private-sector entities in the United States are strongly encouraged to consider the long-term security risks associated with doing business with either ZTE or Huawei for equipment or services. US network providers and systems developers are strongly encouraged to seek other vendors for their projects. Based on available classified and unclassified information, Huawei and ZTE cannot be trusted to be free of foreign state influence and thus pose a security threat to the United States and to our systems."

The constant accusations became such a burden that Ren Zhengfei, the 69-year-old founder and CEO of Huawei, announced in November 2013 that the company was abandoning the US market. As Foreign Policy reported, Zhengfei told a French newspaper: "'If Huawei gets in the middle of

US-China relations,' and causes problems, 'it's not worth it'."

But while American companies were being warned away from supposedly untrustworthy Chinese routers, foreign organisations would have been well advised to beware of American-made ones. A June 2010 report from the head of the NSA's Access and Target Development department is shockingly explicit. The NSA routinely receives or intercepts routers, servers and other computer network devices being exported from the US before they are delivered to the international customers.

The agency then implants backdoor surveillance tools, repackages the devices with a factory seal and sends them on. The NSA thus gains access to entire networks and all their users. The document gleefully observes that some "SIGINT tradecraft is very hands-on (literally!)".

Eventually, the implanted device connects back to the NSA. The report continues: "In one recent case, after several months a beacon implanted through supply-chain interdiction called back to the NSA covert infrastructure. This call back provided us access to further exploit the device and survey the network."

It is quite possible that Chinese firms are implanting surveillance mechanisms in their network devices. But the US is certainly doing the same.

Warning the world about Chinese surveillance could have been one of the motives behind the US government's claims that Chinese devices cannot be trusted. But an equally important motive seems to have been preventing Chinese devices from supplanting American-made ones, which would have limited the NSA's own reach. In other words, Chinese routers and servers represent not only economic competition but also surveillance competition.

U.S. Internet Providers Allow 'Permanent Congestion' and Want Cash To Clear It Up

Major Internet service providers in the United States are essentially holding their connections for ransom while letting customers suffer, according to a company that acts as a middleman for Internet traffic.

The accusations come from Level 3, which helps deliver traffic from content providers (such as Netflix) to Internet service providers (such as Comcast). Level 3 has been measuring its connections around the world, and found that U.S. ISPs are the worst at allowing congestion to happen.

Level 3 has 51 peers around the world, including ISPs and other middlemen. Out of those 51 connections, a dozen are congested, causing slower speeds or interruptions. Half of those 12 congested connections are due to a single port, and those are all being upgraded.

The other six connections are congested on nearly all ports, and all of those connections are to consumer-facing Internet service providers. One of those ISPs is in Europe; the other five are in the United States. As a result, customers are experiencing delayed or dropped packets throughout the day.

In other words, U.S. Internet providers are the worst at making sure

their networks can meet demand, at least from Level 3. Instead of augmenting their network capacity (at costs that are not significant, according to Level 3), these ISPs are holding out for payments, either from middlemen or from content providers such as Netflix.

While Level 3 doesn't name names, this practice isn't exactly a secret. In February, Netflix signed an interconnection deal with Comcast, allowing Netflix to skip the middleman and have a more direct connection to Comcast subscribers. In April, Netflix made a similar deal with Verizon.

It's important to note that these aren't entirely new costs for Netflix, because the company would have been paying a middleman such as Level 3 if it wasn't paying ISPs directly. The concern, as Netflix has expressed recently, is that large ISPs will be in position to escalate their fees in the future. (For now, at least, ISPs aren't charging predatory rates, according to GigaOm.)

Even if the United States had strong net neutrality protections in place, these issues wouldn't count as a violation. Net neutrality rules typically deal with the last mile of connectivity between the ISP and the user, so any congestion between the ISP and a middleman like Level 3 wouldn't be covered. But that's exactly what Level 3 is hoping to change as the FCC considers new net neutrality rules.

The counter-argument is that this is more of a business issue than a net neutrality one, and that Level 3 isn't exactly innocent when it comes to demanding payment for lopsided peering arrangements. So while you should be upset that ISPs are making customers suffer and can get away with it because of how little competition they face you should also take Level 3's wants and needs with a pinch of salt.

Google Already Getting Requests From Europeans To Be "Forgotten"

Just days after the European High Court of Justice ruled that people have the "right to be forgotten," Google is getting requests from criminals wanting links to information about their crimes removed.

Tuesday's ruling stated that under European privacy laws, individuals can have the right to request search engines remove links to information they feel is no longer relevant.

As of Friday, Google had received multiple such requests from Europeans, a source close to the company familiar with the situation told USA TODAY.

How the requirement will be implemented isn't yet known.

"That's the question that everybody is asking themselves at this point," said Rita Di Antonio, European director for the International Association of Privacy Professionals in Giulianova, Italy.

It appears Google plans to comply with the court's ruling.

In a statement, the company said, "this is logistically complicated - not least because of the many languages involved and the need for careful review. As soon as we have thought through exactly how this will work, which may take several weeks, we will let our users know."

It will be difficult for Google to pick and choose which requests it will honor, said Eduardo Ustaran, a lawyer who specializes in privacy law in London.

If it rejects a request, "regulators in each member state would then have to fight in the citizen's corner," Ustaran, author of "The Future of Privacy," said. "How are they going to deal with what could become tens of thousands of requests?"

The simplest and cheapest option would be for the internet search company to "automate the take down with some simple forms and then let others worry about whether it has public interest implications," said Lilian Edwards, a professor of internet law at University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland.

The ruling came out of a request by Mario Consteja Gonzalez of Spain about a legal notice that appeared in La Vanguardianewspaper in Barcelona about his home's repossession and auction in 1998.

He said "proceedings concerning him had been fully resolved for a number of years and that reference to them was now entirely irrelevant" and so requested that the notices be removed from the newspaper's web site.

The court ruled that while the paper could keep the page up on its own site, Google must remove the listing from its search index.

The ruling only applies to information retrieved by searching on an individual's name and requests would have to be by the individual, legal experts said.

For example, a Nazi war criminal could ask Google to remove the link to a Wikipedia page about him or her, but couldn't "ask Wikipedia to take down the page," said Edwards.

Examples of link removal requests Google has received:

- A company wanted links about it in a forum discussing consumer rip offs to be removed.
- A former politician requested links to a news article about his behavior when he was previously in office be removed because he wants to run again
- A physician requested that links to a review site about him be removed.
- A man convicted of possession of child sexual abuse imagery requested links to pages about his conviction be removed.
- A celebrity's child asked that links to news articles about a criminal conviction be removed.
- A university lecturer who was suspended wants links to articles about the suspension removed.
- A convicted cyberstalker mentioned in an article about cyberstalking laws requested that links to the article be removed.
- An actor wants articles about an affair with a teenager removed.
- A tax scammer requested that links to information about his crime be removed.
- An individual who tried to kill his family requested a link to a news article about the event be removed.

The first Windows 9 Preview version might not be released until either February or March 2015, a source familiar with Microsoft's plans reports. Chinese leaker FaiKee has posted a screenshot on the My Digital Life forums that seems to indicate that the Windows 9 Preview Release won't arrive until early next year.

OK, seems WZor's [another source familiar with Windows plans] 5/15 win9 trial version is not going to happen FaiKee said. So here's the part below my last screenshot, he added, posting an image that reads Windows 9 Windows Preview Release @ 2015 02-03.

If it's real (couldn't see why it isn't), then you could scrap all previous Win9 release speculations, he said.

The same source posted an earlier screenshot on Neowin, which he referred to in the note above, posted on My Digital Life. That image revealed that Microsoft may be working on a cloud-based version of its operating system that could be sold as Windows 365. It would supposedly sell via a subscription model similar to Office 365, according to rumors. When posting that screenshot, however, FaiKee did not reveal any details about a potential Windows 9 launch.

Driven By Necessity, Mozilla To Enable HTML5 DRM in Firefox

Mozilla announced that it will follow the lead of Microsoft, Google, and Apple and implement support for the contentious HTML5 digital rights management specification called Encrypted Media Extensions (EME).

The organization is partnering with Adobe to make the change. Mozilla will provide the hooks and APIs in Firefox to enable Web content to manipulate DRM-protected content, and Adobe will provide a closed source Content Decryption Module (CDM) to handle the decryption needs.

For a group that's committed to open standards and open source, this was a difficult decision. DRM, which tends to restrict fair use access to copyrighted content, and closed source modules both run counter to Mozilla's goals. Explaining the decision, Mozilla Foundation CEO Mitchell Baker argued that the decision was driven by necessity. With Internet Explorer, Chrome, and Safari all enabling EME, Mozilla faced a problem: if it refused to support EME, it risked driving users seeking to watch DRM-protected content to other browsers.

That streaming media companies want to use EME is beyond doubt. Netflix, for example, offers an HTML5-based player using EME as an alternative to its Silverlight-based front-end. This HTML5 player works in both Chrome and Internet Explorer 11. Baker argues that users will tend to follow the content and hence switch to these browsers whenever they want to watch protected content. This in turn leads those users to question the use of Firefox entirely.

This push for HTML5 and EME is likely to accelerate, too. Google is trying to deprecate support for browser plugins, a move that will, in time, eliminate both Silverlight and Flash as delivery mechanisms for DRM-protected content. For broadcasters that want to target the Web, EME will be the only practical option. This will increase the pressure faced

by Mozilla.

As much as Mozilla as an organization may dislike DRM, and as much as it may believe the EME specification to be flawed, Baker says that Mozilla cannot change the industry alone. As such, it needs to support DRM, too. The choice of whether to use the DRM facilities will be left to the end user, and those who do not want to use it can elect not to activate it. The CDM will not actually be distributed with Firefox, either; if users elect to use it, it will be downloaded from Adobe.

In a more technical post, Mozilla CTO Andreas Gal outlines some of the ways that the Firefox developers have tried to isolate the Adobe CDM to ensure that this closed source black box cannot breach user privacy or undermine system security. The CDM is run in an isolated sandbox without access to the network or the user's hard drive.

HTML5's DRM system also includes a unique identifier that content providers can use to identify devices. Mozilla has taken pains to make this as minimally invasive as possible. Firefox will give each site a unique ID, preventing providers from tracking users across multiple sites. The ID will also not disclose any details of the underlying hardware.

As a silver lining, Gal writes that implementing EME will make it easier for Mozilla to phase out support for general purpose plugins, as HTML5 DRM eliminates one of the biggest use cases for these plugins.

In some ways, the DRM issue mirrors the earlier video codec issue. For a long time, Mozilla refused to implement support for H.264-encoded video because of the licensing and patent issues associated with that compression algorithm. But driven by the need to play back the video that was abundant on the Web and the battery efficiency that comes from leveraging hardware-accelerated H.264 playback the group eventually relented.

There are some similarities in the way Mozilla has chosen to resolve the issue, too. For H.264 support, Firefox defers to third-party code that's often closed source: the built-in H.264 codecs available on Windows and OS X and the hardware support found in the chips used in tablets and smartphones.

In both cases, Mozilla found itself unable to change the direction of media industry juggernauts. DRM, like H.264, is entrenched in the video industry, and the proliferation of apps strongly suggests that content producers would sooner give up the Web before giving up content protection. Combined with a userbase that seems largely indifferent to the concerns raised Netflix users are demonstrably willing to use DRM, for example Mozilla's leverage is minimal at best.

This is not to say that the organization has not tried. Mozilla has pushed watermarking as a superior alternative to DRM, but this approach seems to have done little to interest content owners. Without some large user-driven pushback against DRM, it's hard to see this situation changing.

Here s More Evidence That Google+ Is On The Chopping Block

It might be time to start playing a mournful bugle melody for Google+. Google's social network, which for a while became the Clippy of social networks because of its annoying efforts to insert itself into every other Google service, will not be featured at any panels at Google's I/O developers conference next month, Droid Life notices. In contrast, Google held several panels on Google+ at its 2012 and 2013 I/O conferences, which really does make it seem as though Google is starting to ease off promoting its polarizing social network.

News that this year's Google I/O won't feature anything on Google+ follows reports we read last month where unnamed sources said that Google would no longer require that Google+ be integrated into every one of its products and that the company would chop up pieces of Google+ and use it much more as a general platform than as a social network that's trying to compete with Facebook.

This means that a good chunk of the Google+ team would be going to other divisions: The team working on Hangouts, for instance, would be shifted to the Android team, while other divisions would be shifted to Chrome.

It's doubtful that Google will completely kill off Google+ right away but it wouldn't be surprising to see the company let it die on the vine until only the most dedicated Google+ users are still on the platform.

Adobe Creative Cloud Up After Outage, May Compensate Customers

Adobe Systems Inc said on Friday that access to its Creative Cloud was restored following an outage that disrupted the Web-based, subscription service to top-selling software programs including Photoshop, Illustrator and Flash for about a day.

Customers can apply to get compensation for the outage, which company spokeswoman Vanessa Rios said lasted about 24 hours and was due to a database software failure.

"We take this matter seriously and compensation will be considered on a case-by-case basis," she said via email.

The service was back up by about 5 p.m. PDT (2000 EDT) on Thursday, the company said.

Rios noted that the outage was not related to last year's massive security breach, which resulted in the theft of tens of millions of customer email addresses and passwords as well as the source code to some of Adobe's top-selling software.

Adobe had an estimated 1.84 million paid Creative Cloud subscriptions as of February. Creative Cloud plans range from \$30 to \$75 per month.

Google Selling Glass Internet Eyewear in U.S.

Google's Internet-linked eyewear - hotly anticipated by some, feared by others - is now available to anyone in the United States with \$1,500 to spare and a yen to become an "explorer."

The decision to open the "Glass" test, or beta, program on Wednesday to anyone with enough money and curiosity came about a month after a one-day sale of the eyewear to the public.

"We learned a lot when we opened our site a few weeks ago, so we've decided to move to a more open beta," said a post on the Glass page at Google+ online social network.

"We're still in the Explorer Program while we continue to improve our hardware and software, but starting today anyone in the US can buy the Glass Explorer Edition, as long as we have it on hand."

In a possible sign of interest in the eyewear, the Glass page on the Google+ network has more than 678,000 followers and has been viewed more than 107 million times.

Google in March said it is joining forces with the frame giant behind Ray-Ban and other high-end brands to create and sell Glass Internet-linked eyewear in the United States.

The partnership with Luxottica was portrayed as Google's "biggest step yet into the emerging smart eyewear market."

The first smart glasses by Luxottica for Google Glass will go on sale in 2015, the head of the Italian eyewear group said Tuesday.

Google has been working to burnish the image of Glass, which has triggered concerns about privacy since the devices are capable of capturing pictures and video.

Google recently sent out a release to debunk what it claims are myths about Glass such as the ideas that it invades privacy, distracts wearers and is for "technology-worshipping geeks."

"If someone wants to secretly record you, there are much, much better cameras out there than one you wear conspicuously on your face and that lights up every time you give a voice command, or press a button," Google said.

"If a company sought to design a secret spy device, they could do a better job than Glass."

During the Explorer testing phase, developers are creating apps for Google Glass, which can range from getting weather reports to sharing videos to playing games.

Google in February gave the early adopters a bit of advice: don't be "Glassholes".

It was the final suggestion in a recommended code of conduct posted online for the software developers and others taking part in the "explorer" program.

The Internet titan appeared intent on avoiding the kinds of caustic run-ins that have seen some Glass wearers tossed from eateries, pubs or other establishments due to concerns over camera capabilities built into devices.

Don't be "creepy or rude (aka, a "Glasshole")," Google said in a guide

posted online for Explorer program members.

Glass connects to the Internet using Wi-Fi hot spots or, more typically, by being wirelessly tethered to mobile phones. Pictures or video are may be shared through the Google Plus social network.

Five Facts About Mark Zuckerberg on His 30th Birthday

Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg turns 30 today, so CBS News has rounded up a few facts that you may have not known about the tech prodigy:

Facebook was not Zuckerberg's first attempt at creating a social network. While at Harvard in 2003, he first developed Facemash, a website that asked users to rate students' dorm-directory photos based on attractiveness. It was taken down shortly thereafter. The Harvard Crimson newspaper reported that in the short time the site had been up, it received 450 visitors who had voted on their peers' photos at least 22,000 times.

Ever wondered why he went with a blue color scheme for the Facebook logo? The founder himself is apparently red-green colorblind. As Zuckerberg told the New Yorker in 2010, "blue is the richest color for me - I can see all of blue."

In 2010, the young billionaire signed a public commitment to give away 50 percent of his wealth or more during his lifetime or upon his death. The "Giving Pledge" was started by Microsoft founder Bill Gates and investor Warren Buffet. Facebook's Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg also joined last week, according to Forbes.

He's a romantic. When he married former Harvard classmate Priscilla Chan in a surprise backyard ceremony in 2012, he gave her a ruby ring he designed himself.

He may be a tech genius, but he knows his limits. When Charlie Rose interviewed Zuckerberg and COO Sheryl Sandberg in 2011, Zuckerberg was asked if he planned on creating video games. Zuckerberg told Rose, "No, I'm pretty sure we're not going to build any games. I'll tell you why. Because building games is really hard."

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